



Second Program Year Action Plan

The CPMP Second Annual Action Plan includes the SF 424 and Narrative Responses to Action Plan questions that CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG grantees must respond to each year in order to be compliant with the Consolidated Planning Regulations. The Executive Summary narratives are optional.

SF 424

Complete the fillable fields (blue cells) in the table below. The other items are pre-filled with values from the Grantee Information Worksheet.

Date Submitted	2/15/06	Applc ID	16-600255	Type of Submission	
Date Received by State	NA	State Identifier		Application	Pre-application
Date Received by HUD		Federal Identifier		<input type="checkbox"/> Construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Construction
				<input type="checkbox"/> Non Construction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non Construction
Applicant Information					
Jurisdiction		NY369029 ERIE COUNTY			
Edward A. Rath County Office Building		07-147-9059			
95 Franklin Street		Department			
Buffalo	New York	Environment and Planning			
14202	Country U.S.A.	Planning			
Employer Identification Number (EIN):		County			
16-600255		4/1			
Applicant Type:		Specify Other Type if necessary:			
Local Government: County		Specify Other Type			
Program Funding		U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development			
Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Numbers; Descriptive Title of Applicant Project(s); Areas Affected by Project(s) (cities, Counties, localities etc.); Estimated Funding					
Community Development Block Grant		14.218 Entitlement Grant			
CDBG Project Titles: Community Development		Description of Areas Affected by CDBG Project(s): Erie County Consortium			
\$CDBG Grant Amount: \$3,251,630	\$Additional HUD Grant(s) Leveraged: \$1,152,008	:Describe: Prior year CDBG funds			
\$Additional Federal Funds Leveraged		\$Additional State Funds Leveraged			
\$Locally Leveraged Funds: \$2,804,048		\$Grantee Funds Leveraged			
\$Anticipated Program Income: \$1,161,177		Other (Describe)			
Total Funds Leveraged for CDBG-based Project(s): \$5,117,233					
Home Investment Partnerships Program		14.239 HOME			
HOME Project Titles: HOME and ADDI		Description of Areas Affected by HOME Project(s): Erie County HOME Consortium			

\$HOME Grant Amount: \$1,144,739		\$Additional HUD Grant(s) Leveraged:		Describe	
\$Additional Federal Funds Leveraged			\$Additional State Funds Leveraged		
\$Locally Leveraged Funds			\$Grantee Funds Leveraged		
\$Anticipated Program Income: \$85,000			Other (Describe)		
Total Funds Leveraged for HOME-based Project(s): \$85,000					
Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS				14.241 HOPWA	
HOPWA Project Titles				Description of Areas Affected by HOPWA Project(s)	
\$HOPWA Grant Amount		\$Additional HUD Grant(s) Leveraged		Describe	
\$Additional Federal Funds Leveraged			\$Additional State Funds Leveraged		
\$Locally Leveraged Funds			\$Grantee Funds Leveraged		
\$Anticipated Program Income			Other (Describe)		
Total Funds Leveraged for HOPWA-based Project(s)					
Emergency Shelter Grants Program				14.231 ESG	
ESG Project Titles: ESG				Description of Areas Affected by ESG Project(s): Erie County CDBG Consortium	
\$ESG Grant Amount: \$124,048		\$Additional HUD Grant(s) Leveraged		Describe	
\$Additional Federal Funds Leveraged			\$Additional State Funds Leveraged		
\$Locally Leveraged Funds: \$117,846			\$Grantee Funds Leveraged		
\$Anticipated Program Income			Other (Describe)		
Total Funds Leveraged for ESG-based Project(s): \$117,846					
Congressional Districts of:				Is application subject to review by state Executive Order 12372 Process?	
Applicant Districts: 26,27,28		Project Districts: 26,27,28			
Is the applicant delinquent on any federal debt? If "Yes" please include an additional document explaining the situation.				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes This application was made available to the state EO 12372 process for review on DATE: 1/16/06 <input type="checkbox"/> No Program is not covered by EO 12372 <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Program has not been selected by the state for review	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

Person to be contacted regarding this application		
Thomas	J.	Dearing
Community Planning Coordinator	(716) 856-7256	(716) 858-7248
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Signature of Authorized Representative		Date Signed

Narrative Responses

GENERAL

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is optional, but encouraged. If you choose to complete it, please provide a brief overview that includes major initiatives and highlights that are proposed during the next year.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Executive Summary:

The 2006 Consolidated Application for Community Development, Emergency Shelter, and HOME Investment Partnership funds includes the continuation of many successful programs as well as various new initiatives.

The 2006 budget is reflected on Attachment 1. A positive trend is the high amount of other funds (\$2,804,048) and program income (approximately \$1,131,277) being combined with the Consortium's annual entitlement grant allocations. This further stretches federal dollars and allows the overall program to better address high priority areas.

1. Community Development Program Highlights

. Twenty-five (25) community projects will be funded this year. This represents approximately 33% of the entitlement grant allocation. In addition, \$1,104,036 in prior year funds are being redirected to the community project category. These monies primarily include funds from cancelled or unallocated economic development projects.

. An emphasis in 2006 will again be on infrastructure improvements within low/moderate-income areas. Sidewalk replacement, water/sewer work, and street improvements are typical undertakings.

. The Rural Transit Service (RTS) Program is now operating within 25 of the 34 Consortium municipalities. It remains a popular and successful human service for low/moderate-income residents as well as senior citizens. In 2006 RTS will receive \$226,606 in federal block grant assistance.

2. Housing and Emergency Shelter Program Highlights

. Crisis Services will continue to receive Emergency Shelter funds to provide services for homeless families currently using shelter at area hotels and other lodging establishments. Prior to County ESG funding in 2005 such services were non-existent, with the affected homeless population existing with little or no help in navigating various support services.

. The 2006 PY will represent the second year of carrying out a more targeted approach to implementing the housing rehab program. Over 150 households are on the the wait list for the program. Priority is given to those residing in target areas and older housing stock, as well as having lower incomes.

. The housing inspection services of Belmont Shelter Corporation will be utilized in 2006 as part of the County's First Time Home Buyer delivery system.

3. Economic Development

. In prior years much of the economic development allocation has been committed to brownfield projects at Bethlehem Steel in the City of Lackawanna and Spaulding Fiber in the City of Tonawanda. These undertakings are very complex given property ownership, environmental, and cost issues. As a result, the CDBG funds have been held in abeyance pending resolution of the above matters. Rather than continue this practice which, at times, makes it difficult to expend monies in a timely manner, the Department of Environment and Planning will develop a Request For Proposal process in mid-2006. This will define eligible project categories that serve to improve economic conditions within the Consortium and describe the process for awarding funds. It is anticipated that this new approach to distributing economic development monies will result in important projects getting underway quickly, which can contribute to the revitalization of Consortium communities.

General Questions

1. Describe the geographic areas of the jurisdiction (including areas of low income families and/or racial/minority concentration) in which assistance will be directed during the next year.
2. Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the jurisdiction (or within the EMSA for HOPWA) (91.215(a)(1)) during the next year and the rationale for assigning the priorities.
3. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs.

Program Year 2 Action Plan General Questions response:

1. Reference should be made to Maps 3, 4, and 5 that are attached to the hard copy of this 2006 Annual Action Plan. These describe the geographic areas within Erie County in which assistance will be directed in 2006. The titles are noted below:

- a. Map 3: CDBG Neighborhood Target Areas within Erie County
- b. Map 4: CDBG Eligible Block Groups and Survey Areas
- c. Map 5: CDBG Tracts with Substantial Minority Population.

2. The service area for the Erie County/Town of Hamburg Consortium includes a total of 34 municipalities which includes all of Erie County with the exception of the Towns of Amherst, Cheektowaga, Tonawanda and Hamburg for the CDBG program. The total population of the Consortium is 312,649, which does not include the Town of Hamburg's population of 56,259, which is a member of the HOME consortium not the CDBG consortium. There are mainly two census tracts in the consortium that have a high minority population. These two census tracts are both located in the first ward neighborhood of the City of Lackawanna. The City of Lackawanna along with the City of Tonawanda also have the highest low- to moderate- income populations within the consortium. There are a total of 60 income eligible block groups in all but five towns in the consortium. Projects funded in the Action Plan are spread out over this large geographic area due to numerous block groups that are income eligible for assistance. Priority for funding projects is given to those low-income areas that also have a high percentage of poverty. Priority for housing rehabilitation funds are given to those communities that have the highest low-income and poverty concentration. These communities included for higher housing rehabilitation priority in this five year strategic plan are the neighborhoods in the City of Lackawanna and City of Tonawanda. Funding limitations hinder the ability to fund more community development and economic development projects. The housing program has the obstacle of such a large geographic area served, which makes targeting funds and showing major progress in a specific area difficult. This was the reason for increased housing rehabilitation targeting of funds in the Cities of Lackawanna and Tonawanda in this strategic plan.

Managing the Process

- 1. Identify the lead agency, entity, and agencies responsible for administering programs covered by the consolidated plan.
- 2. Identify the significant aspects of the process by which the plan was developed, and the agencies, groups, organizations, and others who participated in the process.
- 3. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to enhance coordination between public and private housing, health, and social service agencies.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Managing the Process response:

1. Lead Agency: The Erie County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consortium is made up of 34 municipalities with diverse characteristics and needs. The Erie County Department of Environment and Planning (DEP) administers the CDBG and Emergency Shelter Grants on behalf of the Consortium communities. DEP also administers the HOME Consortium which includes the 34 municipalities and the Town of Hamburg and the two Villages contained therein. DEP was selected as the lead agency to coordinate the development of the consolidated plan.

2. Consultation and Coordination: The Department consulted with surrounding entitlement communities, state, county and local governmental agencies and social service providers during preparation of the Consolidated Plan.

For the past five years the CDBG Consortium has used a project selection committee to oversee the allocation process for grant funds. The Project Selection Committee (PSC) consists of eleven supervisors or mayors of consortium members and three DEP staff members. A Coordinating Committee is also used to guide the Department in developing and implementing the Consolidated Plan. Members of the committee represent social service providers, local banks, government and community/economic development agencies providing services to low- and moderate-income individuals and families in the Consortium communities. The Supervisor of Hamburg, three members of the Project Selection Committee and DEP also serve on the Coordinating Committee.

DEP held three (3) consultation meetings to discuss community needs and agency goals and initiatives in the principal areas addressed by the Consolidated Plan. Each session was designed to focus on the following topics: decent housing, public/human services, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities. Other meeting goals were to increase awareness of the programs, projects, and allocation processes for the three grants.

3. A major undertaking in 2006 will be more focused meetings with church groups and non-profit organizations serving the First Ward in the City of Lackawanna. Efforts to identify community development and housing needs through a planning process will be discussed and funding sources sought to carry out same.

Citizen Participation

1. Provide a summary of the citizen participation process.
2. Provide a summary of citizen comments or views on the plan.
3. Provide a summary of efforts made to broaden public participation in the development of the consolidated plan, including outreach to minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities.
4. Provide a written explanation of comments not accepted and the reasons why these comments were not accepted.

*Please note that Citizen Comments and Responses may be included as additional files within the CPMP Tool.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Citizen Participation response:

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The Erie County Community Development Consortium and the Town of Hamburg are committed to increasing citizen awareness and involvement in the preparation of the Erie County CDBG, HOME and Emergency Shelter Grant Programs. Through this participation process the grantee will become more aware and sensitive to low- and moderate-income citizens' needs. It will also afford an opportunity to better inform the public of the purpose of these grants, the allocation process, and ensure that selected projects are meeting the needs of these constituents.

1. PARTICIPATION

Prior to the solicitation and selection of the 2006 CD projects, a series of meetings were held. County staff met with representatives of municipalities, community based organizations and housing-related agencies to encourage citizen participation in a series of countywide public forums. The meetings were also used to inform them about the CDBG, HOME, and Emergency Shelter Grant programs, the type of projects eligible for funding, and the project selection process. Articles appeared in local and community newspapers informing the public about the county-wide forums and encouraging their participation. These forums for residents of the 37 municipalities were held on June 29th and 30th, for the purpose of receiving input from them on needs in human services, housing, community/neighborhood improvements and economic development.

Thirty-seven (37) of the municipalities advertised and held public hearings in their respective communities during June of 2005. Input from the above noted forums was also provided to all the Consortium members.

The Coordinating Committee, with representatives of the Erie County Community Development Consortium Project Selection Committee, Lackawanna Community Development Corp., Lackawanna Public Housing Authority, People Inc., Community Concern, Erie County Departments of Social Services, Senior Services, and Environment and Planning, and the Town of Hamburg represented by the Supervisor, reviewed the data gathered by the staff, issues and needs identified by residents, governmental agencies, and service providers along with the priorities, strategy and objectives established in the draft Five-Year Plan to address those needs.

Within the 37 municipalities in the HOME Consortium, the low- and very-low-income population is not concentrated in one identifiable area. For that reason, during 2005 there were three public forums held in areas with census tracts containing sizable populations of very-low and low-income residents. The forums were held in the Collins library, Lackawanna library, and Depew Village Hall. Geographically these municipalities are spread out throughout the Consortium thus providing easy accessibility for residents from any area.

Most minorities living in the CD and HOME Consortium communities reside in the City of Lackawanna. One of the public forums was held in Lackawanna in a location convenient for those residents. All sites were accessible for individuals with limited mobility. Special meetings and information for non-English speaking residents were available upon request. Interpretation services were available for meetings if requested in advance.

The formal public comment period on the 2006 Annual Action Plan extended from January 13 to February 13, 2006. It also included public hearings held on January 23, 24, and 25, 2006 in the City of Tonawanda, Town of Hamburg, and City of Lackawanna, respectively. A summary table of all meetings held during the 2006 action plan citizen participation process is included as Attachment 2 to this document.

The following provides a summary of the comments received and responses made during the citizen participation process:

1. There were no major comments received.

Institutional Structure

1. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to develop institutional structure.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Institutional Structure response:

Reference should be made to the institutional structure narrative contained on page 19 of the CPMP version of the 2005-09 Consolidated Plan and page A-1 of the hard copy version.

The major institutional change in 2006 concerning the Consortium is that the year represents the first 12-month period of each community's new 3 year renewal agreement with Erie County. All 37 communities agreed to continue membership in the Consortium through 2008.

In 2006 Erie County will enter continue an agreement with Belmont Shelter Corporation, a non-profit housing agency located in the City of Buffalo, to perform various housing inspection services needed for the County's First Time Home Buyer program. This will help offset administrative losses within Erie County at the program delivery level due to funding cuts, and address a looming gap in the housing program delivery area.

Monitoring

1. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to monitor its housing and community development projects and ensure long-term compliance with program requirements and comprehensive planning requirements.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Monitoring response:

1. Housing: A monthly housing report is prepared by the CDBG administrative staff. This document notes payouts, current balances, and other items useful to the housing management section.

(a) Other examples of program design items that insure long term compliance with program requirements include the following:

- . Annual spot residency checks on first time home buyer recipients;

- . Annual monitoring of rental rehab recipients to insure compliance with County-imposed rent affirmative marketing, and occupancy requirements;
 - . Monitoring of Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) projects to insure compliance with income eligibility, rents, and other HOME requirements;
 - . Annual update of the Erie County Housing Program Policy and Procedures Manual;
 - . Annual preparation of the Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER) that includes a thorough review of housing program performance relative to five-year housing goals;
 - . Preparation of Annual Status Report to the County's Impediments to Fair Housing report. This document is reviewed by the County's Fair Housing Consultant - Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) to insure accuracy.
2. Community Development: Staff meets bi-weekly to review progress and insures that projects are moving along earnestly and swiftly. Two times annually letters are forwarded to Mayors and Supervisors representing municipalities where progress has been slow. This provides a good benchmark concerning developing issues/concerns.
3. Other examples of program design items that insure long-term compliance with program requirements include the following:
- . Preparation of annual MBE/WBE report to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This document is reviewed by the County's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity to insure consistency with County policy;
 - . Preparation of annual Labor Standards Report for submittal to HUD;
 - . A County monitor is assigned to each community in order to provide "hands on" assistance when preparing applications for CDBG funds. This insures that eligibility, Davis-Bacon, MBE/WBE, and other federal requirements are understood by sub-recipient local governments;
 - . On-going Community Project monitoring table is maintained by program staff and reviewed at monthly update meetings. This serves as a good tracking tool to monitor each project's progress through the various CDBG procedural steps.

Lead-based Paint

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to evaluate and reduce the number of housing units containing lead-based paint hazards in order to increase the inventory of lead-safe housing available to extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Lead-based Paint response:

The following actions will take place to evaluate and reduce the number of housing units containing a lead-based paint hazard.

- a. The Consortium will continue to implement a housing rehab program that fully complies with federal lead-based paint requirements. A contract is in place with Stohl Environmental to perform lead paint risk assessments and clearance tests on houses seeking rehab assistance.
- b. The Erie County Health Department will implement the Healthy Homes Initiative in certain neighborhoods within the Consortium. Outreach to specific households will occur where there is a high likelihood of lead-based paint problems. Education of household members, home maintenance tips, and other resources will be presented to the participants. The Erie County Department of Environment and Planning CDBG staff will be coordinating rehab intakes with the Healthy Homes Program to better target houses in need of lead paint hazards removal.
- c. In 2006 the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning will have two housing staff personnel trained to undertake visual assessments for lead-based paint and one risk assessor.

HOUSING

Specific Housing Objectives

*Please also refer to the Housing Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve during the next year.
2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by this Action Plan.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Specific Objectives response:

1. In 2006 key housing priorities include concentrating housing rehab funds in two target neighborhoods within the Cities of Tonawanda and Lackawanna, and a continuation of the weighted wait list system for other rehab funds. The latter is based on income, age of house, type of improvements, age of head of household, and location of house. The current wait list for rehab funds is 150 families.

Specific annual housing objectives for 2006 are culled from those noted in Table 2c of the 2005-09 Consolidated Plan: These are summarized as follows:

H1.1 Provide low-interest loans to 9 eligible households in the First Ward target area within the City of Lackawanna and to 9 eligible households within the City of Tonawanda target neighborhood.

H1.2 Provide grants to 8 low-income mobile home renters living in the urban area and having a housing condition problem.

H1.3 Rehabilitate 5 rental units in the City of Lackawanna First Ward target area and 2 rental units in the City of Tonawanda target area by providing low-interest loans to owners of rental units.

H2.1 Provide low-interest loans to 30 eligible households that own homes in the rural area of the County for housing rehab.

H2.2 Provide grants to 5 mobile home renters living in the rural area of the County for housing rehab.

H3.1 Provide low-interest loans to 30 income eligible homeowners for housing rehab living in the developed area of the County.

H3.2 Provide grants to 20 low-income mobile home renters living in the developed area of the County for housing rehab.

H4.1 Establish a quick response housing repair loan program that will assist 10 households facing repair emergencies.

H4.2 Provide grant funds to 5 handicapped individuals needing alterations to their structures for handicapped accessibility.

H5.1 Provide low-interest loans to 5 households for utility connection needs.

H5.2 Provide deferred payment loans to 50 households seeking financial assistance to purchase a home for the first time.

2. In addition to federal CDBG funds expected to be allocated to the County Consortium, the following 2006 resources also will assist in meeting the rehab goals noted below:

a. Lackawanna Housing Development Corporation:

- Fund Source: New York State Affordable Housing Corporation
- Amount: \$100,000
- Purpose: Housing rehab of owner-occupied units in the City of Lackawanna

b. Southtown Rural Preservation Company:

- Fund Source: New York State Affordable Housing Corporation and Federal Home Loan Bank of New York
- Amount: \$360,000
- Purpose: Housing rehab of owner-occupied units in southern Erie County

c. USDA Rural Development Office - Ellicottville, NY

- Fund Source: USDA Rural Development Program
- Amount: \$37,500
- Purpose: Housing rehab of five owner-occupied units in rural Erie County

Needs of Public Housing

1. Describe the manner in which the plan of the jurisdiction will help address the needs of public housing and activities it will undertake during the next year to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership.
2. If the public housing agency is designated as "troubled" by HUD or otherwise is performing poorly, the jurisdiction shall describe the manner in which it will provide financial or other assistance in improving its operations to remove such designation during the next year.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Public Housing Strategy response:

The following initiatives will occur in 2006 to encourage home ownership for current tenants within the City of Lackawanna public housing complexes at Baker Homes, Gates Homes, and Parkview Towers.

1. Specific outreach mailings and meetings will continue to occur to inform residents about the Erie County American Dream Downpayment Initiative Program and Targeted First Time Home Buyer programs.
2. In 2005 Erie County worked with the Community Action Organization and HSBC Bank to form a First Time Home Buyer Club targeted toward public housing tenants. Thus far 10 members are active and meetings have been occurring centered on home ownership education counselling, credit counselling, and other home ownership issues. This successful program will continue into 2006.

Barriers to Affordable Housing

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to remove barriers to affordable housing.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Barriers to Affordable Housing response:

The Consortium will prepare, in conjunction with the Town of Amherst HOME Consortium, an update to the 1996 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing report. This will provide a comprehensive process to involve the public in identifying perceived barriers to affordable housing and the identification of an action strategy to remove such barriers wherever possible. This is a major undertaking for 2006.

HOME/ American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI)

1. Describe other forms of investment not described in § 92.205(b).
2. If the participating jurisdiction (PJ) will use HOME or ADDI funds for homebuyers, it must state the guidelines for resale or recapture, as required in § 92.254 of the HOME rule.

3. If the PJ will use HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is that is being rehabilitated with HOME funds, it must state its refinancing guidelines required under § 92.206(b). The guidelines shall describe the conditions under which the PJ will refinance existing debt. At a minimum these guidelines must:
 - a. Demonstrate that rehabilitation is the primary eligible activity and ensure that this requirement is met by establishing a minimum level of rehabilitation per unit or a required ratio between rehabilitation and refinancing.
 - b. Require a review of management practices to demonstrate that disinvestments in the property has not occurred; that the long-term needs of the project can be met; and that the feasibility of serving the targeted population over an extended affordability period can be demonstrated.
 - c. State whether the new investment is being made to maintain current affordable units, create additional affordable units, or both.
 - d. Specify the required period of affordability, whether it is the minimum 15 years or longer.
 - e. Specify whether the investment of HOME funds may be jurisdiction-wide or limited to a specific geographic area, such as a neighborhood identified in a neighborhood revitalization strategy under 24 CFR 91.215(e)(2) or a Federally designated Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community.
 - f. State that HOME funds cannot be used to refinance multifamily loans made or insured by any federal program, including CDBG.
4. If the PJ is going to receive American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI) funds, please complete the following narratives:
 - a. Describe the planned use of the ADDI funds.
 - b. Describe the PJ's plan for conducting targeted outreach to residents and tenants of public housing and manufactured housing and to other families assisted by public housing agencies, for the purposes of ensuring that the ADDI funds are used to provide down payment assistance for such residents, tenants, and families.
 - c. Describe the actions to be taken to ensure the suitability of families receiving ADDI funds to undertake and maintain homeownership, such as provision of housing counseling to homebuyers.

Program Year 2 Action Plan HOME/ADDI response:

1. The Erie County Consortium will utilize HOME/ADDI funds in 2006 only in the manner described in Section 92.205B of the Home Final Rule, as said rule has been updated through December 22, 2004.

2. The guidelines for recapture of HOME funds under the First Time Home Buyer Program are as follows:

If the participants under the First Time Home Buyer Program sell the HOME investment property prior to conclusion of the ten year affordability period, the County will attempt to recapture the HOME and/or American Dream Downpayment Initiative Funds direct subsidy that was used to assist the Home Buyer. The amount the County will recapture will be the entire HOME/ADDI direct subsidy minus 10 percent for each full year the homeowner has occupied the property.

In the event of foreclosure or where a voluntary sale of the house occurs, and the net proceeds are insufficient to repay the HOME/ADDI investment due, Erie County shall recapture an amount less than or equal to the net proceeds amount. The net proceeds are the sales price minus lien repayments (other than HOME funds) and any closing costs.

HOME/ADDI funds which the County recaptures from the sale of houses during the affordability period will be used in other HOME/ADDI-funded housing programs within the Erie County HOME Consortium.

3. The Erie County HOME Consortium will not use HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multi-family housing.

4. American Dream Downpayment Initiative

The Erie County Home Consortium will receive approximately \$21,089 in American Dream Downpayment Initiative monies in the 2006 Program Year. The latter Initiative is intended to help home buyers with down payment and closing cost assistance.

a. Description and Use of Funds. As noted above, \$21,089 will be earmarked to the HOME Consortium in 2005. The monies will be targeted in the following manner:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| 1) Town of Hamburg: | \$ 3,480 |
| 2) Other Consortium Communities: | \$17,609 |

The Program design used to carry out the Erie County First Time Home Buyer Program will apply to the American Dream fund, as it applies to monies used in the Town of West Seneca and other Consortium communities, excluding the Town of Hamburg. The Town of Hamburg will carry out the effort using its own procedures.

In summary, \$6,000 will be made available to eligible households for closing and down payment assistance only.

b. Plan For Targeted Outreach. A special effort to inform residents and tenants of public housing in the Cities of Lackawanna and Tonawanda, as well as mobile home parks, will occur. This will take the form of brochure distribution, public meetings where appropriate, and close coordination with housing complex management.

Coordination will occur with Belmont Shelter, Housing Opportunities Made Equal, and other implementing agencies of the federal Section 8 Program to insure that program information is properly disseminated to all target groups.

c. Actions To Insure Recipients Ability To Undertake And Maintain Homeownership. Erie County has an existing contract with Belmont Shelter Corporation to undertake pre-purchase counseling for all First Time Home Buyers. This requirement will also be extended to ADDI recipients.

Post-purchase counseling and workshops are currently conducted by HOMEFRONT, Inc. for participants in the Erie County Targeted First Time Home Buyer Program. This effort will also include those receiving ADDI monies.

HOMELESS

Specific Homeless Prevention Elements

*Please also refer to the Homeless Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Sources of Funds—Identify the private and public resources that the jurisdiction expects to receive during the next year to address homeless needs and to prevent homelessness. These include the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs, other special federal, state and local and private funds targeted to homeless individuals and families with children, especially the chronically homeless, the HUD formula programs, and any publicly-owned land or property. Please describe, briefly, the jurisdiction's plan for the investment and use of funds directed toward homelessness.
2. Homelessness—In a narrative, describe how the action plan will address the specific objectives of the Strategic Plan and, ultimately, the priority needs identified. Please also identify potential obstacles to completing these action steps.
3. Chronic homelessness—The jurisdiction must describe the specific planned action steps it will take over the next year aimed at eliminating chronic homelessness by 2012. Again, please identify barriers to achieving this.
4. Homelessness Prevention—The jurisdiction must describe its planned action steps over the next year to address the individual and families with children at imminent risk of becoming homeless.
5. Discharge Coordination Policy—Explain planned activities to implement a cohesive, community-wide Discharge Coordination Policy, and how, in the coming year, the community will move toward such a policy.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Special Needs response:

1. Sources of Funds

Over the next year, funds from the HUD Shelter Plus Care, Supportive Housing, and Emergency Shelter Grant competitions will be used to provide housing and services to homeless individuals and their families as well as those at risk for homelessness. In addition to these federal dollars, match funds are available through the New York State Offices of Mental Health, Children and Families, Veterans Assistance, and Homeless Housing Assistance Programs. The Erie County Department of Mental Health and Social Services also provide match funds and contract with agencies to provide necessary services. Finally, volunteers, corporations, and private donors make contributions to further the needed work.

Funds received in Erie County for the homeless population will provide permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless persons, homeless individuals with a primary diagnosis of alcohol or substance abuse/dependence and/or mental illness. Transitional housing and services will also be funded for homeless single women and women with children, some who are victims of domestic violence.

Emergency shelter facilities will also be funded for homeless single individuals, families with children, youths, and women made homeless due to alcohol and substance abuse.

Program resources for the homeless will be used to develop and implement service delivery and referral programs which will provide greater access to Supplemental Security Income and other mainstream benefits, medical treatment, and housing services to homeless persons in Erie County. A program to prevent homelessness will also be funded. The program will provide resources and referrals to individuals and families to prevent homelessness.

2. Homelessness

In an effort to meet the needs of homeless persons, Erie County has developed several key strategies.

Use of Homeless Management Information System Technology: To improve service delivery and accountability Erie County has decided to implement a community-wide Homeless Management Information System (Buffalo Area Services – Network). Already responsible for homeless data collection in Western New York, the Homeless Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY) is responsible for the central administration of the HMIS as well as coordination of service providers and data reporting. Working with housing providers, HAWNY will be able to collect unduplicated counts of homeless clients accessing services throughout Erie County and use this information to improve coordination of services.

Increase Awareness of Available Resources: Another important issue is the availability of information for persons at risk for homelessness. To solve this problem, Erie County has worked to improve coordination among street outreach and emergency feeding program workers. Outreach workers from local agencies are now meeting formally on a monthly basis to discuss difficult cases, to maximize encounters, and to work together to develop a coordinated case assessment and management plan. Outreach workers are now better able to coordinate efforts and work in concert with each other on a daily basis.

Through the work of the collaboration, homeless outreach teams from Lake Shore Behavioral Health and Crisis Services are also better able to identify persons who fall into the chronic homelessness category. The outreach teams are integral to the treatment and care of the chronically homeless population as many have grown distrustful of service providers or are distrustful as a symptom of their disability. The teams meet individuals on a regular, repetitive, and consistent basis. This allows the outreach team members to establish trust and rapport with the individual, which ultimately helps get them connected to needed services.

Moving forward, Erie County also recognizes that associations with faith-based and local community leaders must be strengthened. Persons in need often turn to the resources immediately around them first, including places of worship and neighborhood associations. Community workshops are scheduled to help clergy and neighborhood leaders to learn how to make proper referrals and how to best meet the needs of those to whom they minister or serve.

Increase Access to Mainstream Resources and Public Benefits: To prevent homelessness and ensure a better rate of success for homeless individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness, a self-sufficiency calculator has been developed. This internet-based application can be used by any case manager to determine eligibility levels for twelve mainstream resource supports. In Erie County, many individuals did not realize that they were eligible for many federal benefit programs. This tool helps to remove barriers to self-sufficiency and helps individuals and families who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness to access needed supports. It is expected that this calculator will dramatically increase the use of mainstream resources by low-income individuals and families.

Community Collaboration: As part of a national effort sponsored by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the Bush Administration, Erie County has developed a plan to end long-term homelessness in Buffalo and Erie County. Known as the PRISM Project, the initiative has five overarching goals:

PREVENTION - Expand the range and availability of homeless prevention strategies, increase immediate accessibility, and improve long-term effectiveness in order to reduce the number of chronically homeless individuals in our community.

RESOURCES - Increase awareness of and linkages to mainstream and community resources including: Medicaid, Child Health Insurance Programs, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Food Stamps, Social Security Insurance, and Veterans Health Care.

INDEPENDENCE THROUGH HOUSING - Expand the availability of affordable permanent housing for chronically homeless individuals by adopting a "Housing First" philosophy.

SERVICES - Improve service provision throughout the homeless continuum of care by increasing relationships among homeless housing and service providers.

MAINTENANCE – Improved follow-up and wrap-around assistance to ensure self-sufficiency.

The above-stated goals require a substantial re-orientation of the homeless service delivery system, as well as an evaluation of the use of current resources and significant cross-system collaboration. To this end, ECCH will work with its membership to develop periodic action plans that detail short-term implementation strategies and identify needed changes to the current homeless continuum of care. These action plans form the basis of Erie County's strategy to end homelessness and make it possible to identify what additional services or linkages are needed to reduce the number of individuals living on the streets or in emergency shelters.

Homeless Housing Strategies: The amount of emergency shelter and transitional housing available in Erie County appears to be adequate at this time. As such, the community will attempt to increase connections between these housing facilities and local social and human service agencies that offer substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence counseling; education and job training; childcare and transportation assistance; case management; housing placement; and independent living skills classes. In addition to maintaining emergency shelter and transitional housing options and improving collaborations between providers, Erie County also recognizes the high need to create new permanent housing options for all homeless population.

Goal: Use HMIS technology to improve service delivery and accountability.

Action Steps:

- a. Move all emergency and transitional housing providers onto the HMIS
- b. Establish HMIS performance measures for emergency and transitional housing providers and begin monitoring performance
- c. Move all permanent supportive housing providers onto the HMIS
- d. Establish HMIS performance measures for permanent supportive housing providers and begin monitoring
- e. Leverage success of HMIS to secure additional funding for inclusion of homeless outreach programs and non-residential homeless service providers in system
- f. Monitor progress on HMIS performance measures for all housing types

Goal: Increase awareness of available resources among at-risk populations and the larger community.

Action Steps:

- a. Train case workers, health care providers, discharge planners, and community groups on the use of the web-based, benefits eligibility calculator tool
- b. Launch "Don't Wait Until It's Too Late" media campaign to encourage at-risk community members to access mainstream resources and available community services; campaign to include targeted outreach to health clinics and emergency feeding sites
- c. Continue workshops as well as distribution of resource cards and guides to religious communities, community centers, other community-based organizations and homeless persons

Goal: Increase access to mainstream resources by homeless persons.

Action Steps:

- a. Increase use of web-based benefits eligibility calculator tool through outreach, training, and PR campaigns
- b. Electronically link HMIS users to calculator tool for electronic benefit screening
- c. Secure Funding for SSI Homeless Outreach Program to aid the chronically homeless in the process of applying for and receiving SSI benefits

Goal: Increase community cooperation through the PRISM Project.

Action Steps:

- a. Finalize PRISM Project ten-year plan to end long-term homelessness
- b. Develop specific implementation plan to measure performance on plan (including use of HMIS)
- c. Engage in community education around the ten-year plan efforts with funders, donors, and the larger community
- d. Monitor on-going performance

Goal: Increase housing collaborations and options for hard-to-serve individuals with mental illnesses and/or chemical addictions.

Action Steps:

- a. Examine opportunities to increase utilization of existing PSH beds by mentally ill and/or substance addicted adults with families
- b. Work with mental health and substance abuse providers to expand their supportive services menus to include programming for children and other family members
- c. Explore permanent housing options available to families including rapid re-housing and housing first models
- d. Convene meeting of present and potential housing providers to discuss opportunities to develop and fund projects
- e. Assess appropriate neighborhood locations and buildings with rehabilitation potential.
- f. Request funding for projects through local, state, and federal funding streams

Despite progress made toward ending homelessness in Erie County, the local homeless continuum faces several obstacles to achieving these goals.

- **Prevention:** According to local research, once a person becomes homeless for the first time, the likelihood is that they will become homeless again. Interventions are necessary to prevent an individual from losing their housing. Prevention efforts are difficult to fund, and strategies to address and fund around homelessness prevention will be included in the final 10-year plan.
- **Funding for Supportive Services:** It is difficult to find and secure funding for supportive-services-only efforts. It is especially important to attach services to clients who move in and out of homeless services or leave the homeless assistance system and need follow-up supports.
- **Maintenance:** There must be follow-up to ensure that, once housed, chronically homeless persons are given the support necessary to remain housed. This reality is a goal of the PRISM Project Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, and strategies to address maintenance will be included in the completed plan.

3. Chronic Homelessness

The ultimate goal of the Erie County Consortium Community Development Program's chronic homeless strategy is to provide this population with stable living environments and the wrap-around services needed to increase self-sufficiency and stability in the community. The ECCCDP will focus on several key areas including outreach, housing, services, and maintenance as part of our efforts. In addition, it has become increasingly evident that collaboration is the key to success with this population. No one agency is able to provide all of the services required to permanently house and support the chronically homeless. Service providers must work together to solve this problem.

Outreach: The local homeless continuum engages chronically homeless persons on a daily basis through outreach efforts on the streets, under bridges, at bus stations, at the drop-in center, and places not meant for human habitation, while reaching out to persons living in emergency shelters. Thus, outreach teams are integral to the treatment and care of the chronically homeless. Many chronically homeless persons have grown distrustful of traditional service providers. Outreach providers meet with individuals on a consistent basis, allowing trust and rapport to be developed over time. Such relationship-building ultimately enables homeless persons to connect with needed mainstream resources, services, and housing.

Housing: While the ECCCDP does not yet have specific housing exclusively for chronically homeless persons, all Shelter Plus Care and many Permanent Supportive Housing units are available to chronically homeless persons. As existing programs are not specifically designed for the chronically homeless, they often face difficulties when attempting to serve higher-demand consumers. A 20-bed permanent housing program specially designed for chronically homeless persons, which includes increased case management services has been prioritized as the number one project in the 2006 Continuum of Care application. This project will play an integral role within the homeless community as it will make it possible to more adequately serve this population. Likewise, low-demand housing, including a Safe Haven for chronically homeless men and women, is being developed. A broad cross-section of housing and service providers are participating in this effort.

Services: At present, case management services are available for some chronically homeless individuals staying in emergency shelters or those individuals with a mental health diagnosis. In addition, special efforts are made by outreach teams and case managers to help those individuals with disabling conditions to access mainstream resources, specifically, Medicaid, Food Stamps, Social Security, Social Security Disability, Veterans Health Care, and other benefits. Efforts to link all homeless subpopulations to mainstream resources are ongoing in the community and include the use of the web-based, benefits eligibility calculator tool developed by the Self-Sufficiency Coalition. Outreach teams and case managers also receive special training on how to best serve chronically homeless persons.

Maintenance: Relatively few local programs provide follow-up case management or services following program exit. The ECCCDP recognizes, however, that this is a particularly important service for chronically homeless individuals as they often need more intensive follow-up to maintain their housed status.

Goal: Maintain existing housing while increasing housing options for the chronically homeless

Action Steps:

- a. Ensure homeless housing providers are trained to serve the chronically homeless population
- b. Develop outreach and case management programming utilizing a client-based model (i.e., services are attached to clients rather than program slots)
- c. Retain permanent supportive housing units through continued HUD funding
- d. Secure funds for 20-bed Erie County Department of Mental Health (ECDMH) Chronic Homeless Project
- e. Seek funding for new 20-bed Safe Haven Project for chronically homeless men and women
- f. Seek funding for increased outreach and case management services available to chronic homeless persons

Goal: Increase access to mainstream resources for the chronically homeless

Action Steps:

- a. Increase use of web-based, benefits eligibility calculator tool through outreach and training
- b. Electronically link HMIS users to calculator tool for electronic benefit screening
- c. Secure funding for SSI Homeless Outreach Program to aid the chronically homeless in the process of applying for and receiving benefits
- d. Seek funding for increased outreach and case management services available to chronic homeless persons

Goal: Ensure supportive services are available for the chronically homeless

Action Steps:

- a. Assist service providers in identifying alternative sources of funding including federal, state, local, and foundation dollars
- b. Launch client-based case management system to serve the chronically homeless persons
- c. Increase collaboration and referrals among local shelters, non-residential homeless, and other nonprofits through workshops, trainings, and presentations

Goal: Increase accountability among all homeless providers

Action Steps:

- a. Ensure homeless housing staffs are trained to serve the chronically homeless.
- b. Develop community standards and performance measures for all classes of homeless housing providers.
- c. Provide community trainings based on the recommendations of CoC Policy Committee
- d. Monitor success among all homeless housing providers on community-determined performance measures

Related to ending chronic homelessness, the Erie County homeless continuum faces several barriers.

- **Housing Units:** There are currently no housing units in place that are solely dedicated to serving the chronically homeless. ECDMH's 20-bed chronic homeless supportive housing project will be a necessary first step toward filling a considerable housing gap. It is critical that housing specifically designed for chronic homeless populations is developed soon.
- **Maintenance:** There must be follow-up services available to chronically homeless persons to ensure that, once housed, they are given the support necessary to remain housed. This reality is a goal of the PRISM Project Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, and strategies to address maintenance will be included in the completed plan.

4. Homelessness Prevention

There are several programs that engage in prevention and outreach activities with homeless, near-homeless, and low-income populations throughout Erie County. These services are often an initial link for many individuals and families as they begin to access the homeless service continuum. Prevention activities include services to reduce the likelihood of becoming homeless among high-risk, low-income individuals and families. Clients are generally connected with prevention activities and community service providers through emergency feeding programs, word of mouth, referrals from hotlines, and publicly available resource guides. Each of these programs will operate in the next year to address both individuals and families with children at imminent risk of homelessness.

Rental/Mortgage Assistance: The local board for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (formerly known as the local FEMA board) makes funds available to seven agencies for emergency grants to prevent eviction or foreclosure. Erie County CDBG Consortium also makes funds available to prevent eviction and foreclosure. Several organizations offer one-time loans or grants to assist with security deposits or one month's rent. These programs include: Community Action Organization, Crisis Services Outreach to the Homeless, which includes services dedicated to the Erie County CDBG Consortium communities, Buffalo Urban League Housing Department and Erie County Department of Social Services. This group is currently coordinated by the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County.

Housing Search/Placement: Several area agencies provide assistance with housing searches to help low-income individuals and families in finding safe and affordable housing. In some cases, these providers can also offer Section 8 vouchers or other housing funds while others help with relocation expenses or tenant/landlord negotiations. These programs include: Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority, Crisis Services, Ken-Bailey Neighborhood Association, Lovejoy Neighborhood Association, Belmont Shelter Corporation, Rental Assistance Corporation, Buffalo Urban League Housing Department, Catholic Charities, Housing Options Made Easy, and Hispanics United of Buffalo. Finally, Housing Opportunities Made Equal conducts investigations and offers counseling to victims of housing discrimination.

Transportation Assistance: A few government-funded programs provide transportation or bus tokens to individuals searching for housing, commuting to the workplace, or receiving services. These include the Erie County Department of Social Services Welfare Diversion and Medicaid Transportation programs. In addition, the Erie County Department of Social Services also offers limited bus passes for a six month period through its “Get a Job, Get a Ride” program.

Child and Family Services operates a “Wheels to Work” program which grants small loans for the purchase of a vehicle. Transportation is available for those with disabilities through Catholic Charities of Buffalo, the Independent Living Center, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, and the Southtowns Wheelchair Van Service.

A Transportation Task Force was started in the late summer of 2005 to address problems locating transportation for homeless, near-homeless, and low-income persons. In its first few months of operation, the group has worked to ensure that homeless and low-income clients are able to access the local, state, and federal transportation assistance they qualify for and looks forward to tackling larger transportation issues in the future.

Mental and Physical Health Assessments: Crisis Services Street Outreach Program, Lake Shore Behavioral Health Homeless Services, and Restoration Society’s Harbor House staff members conduct mental health screenings and assessments for low-income persons frequently at area soup kitchens and the local drop-in center. Cazenovia Recovery Systems provides assessments of chemically-addicted individuals through regularly scheduled visits to emergency facilities.

Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County screens clients for sexually-transmitted diseases and other medical needs through its Mobile Outreach Unit. In addition, the Erie County Health Department’s Indigent Nursing Program provides health assessment and some basic medical care to low-income individuals at various community service agencies. The Community Health Center also does medical assessments.

Finally, the Veteran’s Administration Health Care for the Homeless Program provides medical/psychiatric assessment and treatment to homeless veterans being served in dining rooms and the local drop-in center.

Small Loan Programs: Several local agencies provide small loans for necessary household expenses, including heat and utilities. These funds are available through: Child and Family Services, Catholic Charities, Home Energy Assistance Program, National Fuel Advocates, American Red Cross, Belmont Shelter Self-Sufficiency Program, Buffalo Urban League, Neighbor 4 Neighbor Heat Fund, and Community Action Organization. The Minority Women Business Entrepreneurs Loan also provides funds for starting a home business.

Financial Management/Life Skills: Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Buffalo, Catholic Charities, Business and Professional Women of Buffalo, and Cornell Cooperative Extension provide financial management intervention, counseling services, advice on budgeting and financial problems, and training on other life skills. Other population-specific programs include: Child and Adolescent Treatment Services, Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled, the Independent Living Center, Mental Health Peer Connection, Native American Independent Living Services, and Restoration Society.

Detoxification Services: Detoxification services for alcohol and substance abuse are available through Erie County Medical Center, Buffalo General Hospital, Alcohol and Drug Dependency Services, and Cazenovia Recovery Systems.

Education and Vocational Training: Various organizations offer educational and vocational training for low-income populations. These programs include GED or certificate programs, specific skill development, resume writing, interview training, and assistance with locating jobs through job boards and referrals. Programs include: Greater Buffalo Works Program; Everywoman Opportunity Centers; Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID); Workforce Investment Board; Buffalo General Hospital Vocational Training Center; Veterans Multi-Purpose Employment and Service Center; Buffalo Urban League Multi-Service Center; Buffalo Urban League Answer Program; Buffalo Urban League Employment Program; the Educational Opportunity Center operated by the University at Buffalo; and Buffalo Employment Training Service.

Legal Services: Through collaboration with Neighborhood Legal Services and the University at Buffalo Law School, the Homeless Task Force provides legal assistance and referrals to homeless and near-homeless populations. By traveling to dining facilities, the Task Force is able to overcome many of the obstacles people face when attempting to obtain legal assistance. In many cases, program personnel are able to steer clients to benefit programs that may help lift clients out of their present situation. This team works with high risk sub-populations and is integral in establishing trust with homeless and near-homeless persons.

Legal services for low-income individuals and families are also provided through: the Public Defenders Office, Law Guardian, Action for Mental Health, Legal Advocacy for Disabled Individuals, Legal Aid, Legal Action, University at Buffalo Law Students, Western New York Law Center, and Legal Services for the Elderly and Disadvantaged.

Information and Referral: The Crisis Services Homeless Hotline, the area's 24-hour/7-day-a-week crisis phone line, receives between 1800-2400 calls a year. Of these, nearly forty percent are requests for assistance in preventing homelessness and are responded to with information and referrals to appropriate programs in the community.

Funded through the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, Central Referral Services also provides information about area community services to callers from 9am-5pm every weekday.

The YWCA SAF-NET program offers information and referral services via telephone to individuals living in the Southtowns Region. The program also works collaboratively to provide trainings to service providers in the southern region of Erie County.

Through a partnership with Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), Erie County has developed a web-based tool for determining eligibility for a total of fifteen income supports. Known as the Self-Sufficiency Calculator, the tool also provides information about area services including key contact and referral information. The tool is updated on a regular basis to ensure its accuracy and is available to case managers and service workers across Erie County. There is no charge for access and training is required.

A Self-Sufficiency Baseline Report and Resource Guide is also available free of charge to area businesses, government, and service providers through the Erie County Commission on the Status of Women. The report details services available in the community including child care, family violence services, self-sufficiency programming, education and training programs, and emergency assistance programs (to name a few). A website is being developed by the Erie County Self-Sufficiency Coalition to correspond with the report.

In connection with representatives from the WNY Coalition for the Homeless, Crisis Services Street Outreach to the Homeless, Lake Shore Behavioral Health, and other homeless prevention providers, the Homeless Alliance of WNY distributes pocket resource cards to low-income, at-risk, and homeless individuals and families. The cards highlight emergency services available in the community and are a convenient way to ensure that information is put in the hands of those who need it most.

5. Discharge Coordination Policy

One of Erie County's goals is to assist at-risk and hard-to-serve individuals and families in maintaining a safe living environment. To that end, Erie County seeks to improve its outreach and assessment efforts through proper discharge planning. The Homeless Alliance of Western New York, Crisis Services, Neighborhood Legal Services, Belmont Shelter Corporation, the YWCA of Western New York, Cornerstone Manor and the Salvation Army have been working together as part of a "Discharge Planning Committee" of the Western New York Coalition of the Homeless to look at discharge policies within hospitals, jails and prisons, and other institutions.

A monthly meeting has been arranged with the discharge planners of the Catholic Health System, Kaleida Health Care, and the Erie County Medical Center to address concerns with discharge planning. Despite having discharge planners, staffs in these locations often release persons to the streets or shelters. These inappropriate discharges have decreased since these monthly meetings began happening.

The Discharge Planning Committee is now beginning to look at other areas where inappropriate discharges are happening with greater frequency. Policies from the corrections programs and law enforcement are being reviewed. The subcommittee is working toward the development of a unified discharge planning policy that does not result in homelessness. The group will continue its efforts over the months to come.

Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG)

(States only) Describe the process for awarding grants to State recipients, and a description of how the allocation will be made available to units of local government.

Program Year 2 Action Plan ESG response:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development

*Please also refer to the Community Development Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Identify the jurisdiction's priority non-housing community development needs eligible for assistance by CDBG eligibility category specified in the Community Development Needs Table (formerly Table 2B), public facilities, public improvements, public services and economic development.
2. Identify specific long-term and short-term community development objectives (including economic development activities that create jobs), developed in accordance with the statutory goals described in section 24 CFR 91.1 and the primary objective of the CDBG program to provide decent housing and a suitable living environment and expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

*Note: Each specific objective developed to address a priority need, must be identified by number and contain proposed accomplishments, the time period (i.e., one, two, three, or more years), and annual program year numeric goals the jurisdiction hopes to achieve in quantitative terms, or in other measurable terms as identified and defined by the jurisdiction.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Community Development response:

See the following excerpt from Figure 1 as originally contained in the Final Consolidated Plan 2005-2009.

Figure 1

Summary of Specific Housing/ CD/ Economic Development Objectives - Annual Goals Objective

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CD-1 Infrastructure: Provide appropriate infrastructure service in a manner that maximizes quality and quantity and is protective of the County's natural resources.

CD-1.1 Improve sewer, water service to targeted low-income neighborhoods.
(Annual Goal: 25 people)

CD-1.2 Improve sidewalks for pedestrian safety in targeted low-income neighborhoods. (25 people)

CD-1.3 Improve bicycle and vehicular access to areas of employment, recreation, and commercial activity located in targeted low-income neighborhoods. (25 people)

CD-1.4 Improve storm drainage/flood protection facilities, targeted low-income neighborhoods. (10 people)

CD-2 Public Facilities: Improve existing and expand where necessary, public facilities that respond to community needs.

CD-2.1 Construct, expand, or improve community centers, libraries, and youth centers that serve the low/moderate income population. (2 facilities)

CD-2.2 Develop, expand, and rehabilitate park, recreation, and open space facilities that serve low/moderate income residents. (1 facility)

CD-2.3 Commercial Center Improvement initiatives in targeted village/hamlet centers. (1 commercial center)

CD-2.4 Expansion and improvement to senior center facilities. (1 senior center)

CD-3 Public Services: Support public services needed for quality of life activities.

CD-3.1 Provide senior service program enhancements such as day care, health and nutrition, employment, supportive housing, and transportation. (600 people)

CD-3.2 Provide gap filling support services that support community revitalization and enhance the quality of life for low/moderate income residents. (1,100 people)

CD-4 Planning: Plan for the orderly growth and revitalization of the Consortium area.

CD-4.1 Provide technical assistance and funding for the preparation of plans that direct the area's growth in housing, community development and economic development. (1 plan)

CD-5 Administration: Administer the CDBG, HOME, and ESG Programs in a timely, efficient manner.

CD-5.1 Prepare all federally required reports in a timely and efficient manner. (2 reports)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ED-1 Infrastructure Development: Provide roads, road extensions, water, sewers and others services (i.e. incubator buildings) to industrial, commercial and business sites.

ED-1.1 Look for new opportunities to fund, or participate in funding of infrastructure enhancements to create employment opportunities (1 development site)

ED-2 Brownfield Redevelopment: Redevelop older industrial areas to create economic opportunities in urban areas.

ED-2.1 Look for new opportunities to provide technical assistance and funding for redevelopment of older urbanized areas that need additional assistance to succeed. (1 development site)

ED-3 Economic Development Planning: Conduct studies to identify prospective greenfield and brownfield sites to bring increased economic opportunities.

ED-3.1 Provide technical assistance and funds for the preparation of studies. (1 study)

Summary of Specific Housing/ CD/ Economic Development Objectives - Annual Goals

ED-4 Business Development: Continue to provide technical assistance and investment capital through business loan funds to assist businesses in preserving and creating new economic opportunities.

ED-4.1 Continue to assist businesses through Business Development and Regional Development Corporation loan funds. (5 jobs)

ED-4.2 Develop and implement Microenterprise Loan fund to assist microenterprise businesses and to complement the Village Center Revitalization program and/or the Commercial Center Improvement program. (3 businesses)

ED-4.3 Continue to provide technical assistance and counseling through business assistance directories and company site visits. (5 businesses)

Antipoverty Strategy

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to reduce the number of poverty level families.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Antipoverty Strategy response:

The Erie County Department of Social Services is involved in numerous efforts to reduce the number of people living below the poverty level. This Department relies heavily on direct contact with other agencies, many of which seek to find employment for public assistance recipients. A few of these agencies are the New York State Department of Labor, the Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Development Consortium, and several area school districts.

The Department of Social Services hopes to bring 1,000 persons per year for each of the next five years over the poverty level. The following programs are employed to help meet this objective:

1. Welfare Reform

a) Transition To Work Teams. Employed TANF clients are being served by special teams to assure smooth transitions from welfare to work to independence. Staff in these teams provides benefit counseling, child day care payments, and transitional Medicaid and day care benefits when the client moves off of the TANF program.

b) Job Clubs. TANF and Safety net clients are assigned to full time, two-week long group training and job search activities which, to date, have resulted in private

sector employment for almost two-thirds of all participants. In addition, Job Clubs are now a requirement of both TANF and Safety Net applicants who are employable.

2. Employment Programs

- a) Education for Gainful Employment (EDGE). EDGE is intended to expand the educational and job skills training opportunities for TANF recipients.
- b) BRIDGE. This program developed as a result of coordination between the Department of Social Services and the State University of New York (SUNY) system. SUNY operates the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC), which provides job training and educational preparation services to low-income individuals.

3. Interagency Initiatives

- a) The Erie County Department of Social Services, Buffalo Public Schools Adult Education Division and the United Way of Buffalo will partner to provide diversified work study and employment training services to Safety Net families. The initiative will serve up to 1,000 Safety Net Family Cases. This program will serve those clients that have exceeded their 60-month time limit and who are now funded with only state and local funds.
- b) The Erie County Department of Social Services in partnership with the Erie County Department of Mental Health, Spectrum Human Services, and the Gold Choice Physician Case Management Program will serve up to 250 through a dedicated team to administer a system of enhanced case identification, triage, engagement, service plan collaboration and monitoring practices for Safety Net clients with moderate to high chemical dependency service needs.
- c) The Erie County Department of Social Services in partnership with the Olmsted Conservancy will refer up to 500 TANF clients for workfare experience and employment skills training. The TANF clients will participate in training and then be linked to various job development opportunities through the NYS Department of Labor and the Buffalo Employment and Training One Stop.

4. Family Preservation and Child Welfare

- a) Young Parent Program. A coordinated approach to servicing teen parents will be used, involving caseworkers providing case management (Teenage services Act - TASA), Welfare Examiners providing income maintenance services, and employment counselors to provide employment and training supports. This approach helps the teen to plan for a stable and economically self-sufficient family life.
- b) The Erie County Works Center. A new unit began in 2001 designed to do two things: quickly determine employability of applicants and to reconnect the applicant to the job market as soon as possible. When a customer applies for public assistance a clear emphasis is placed on seeking employment for all able-bodied applicants, including immediate job searches and life skills training while the assistance application is being processed.

NON-HOMELESS SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

Non-homeless Special Needs (91.220 (c) and (e))

*Please also refer to the Non-homeless Special Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve for the period covered by the Action Plan.
2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by this Action Plan.

Program Year 2 Action Plan Specific Objectives response:

Priorities Needs of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

- The Western New York Developmental Disabilities Services Office proposes to develop single family residential homes to accommodate 12 individuals with developmental disabilities.
- A conference is being planned by WNYDDSO and other federal and local agencies to determine the local housing needs of individual with developmental disabilities and how these needs can best be met.

Source of funds: New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

Priorities Needs of Persons with Severe Mental Illness

- The Erie County Department of Mental Health plan to establish a Single Room Occupancy OMH licensed facility for ten seriously mentally ill individual
- The Department of Mental Health plan to develop five additional Supportive Housing Slots tied to the Residential component of Single Point of Accountability

Source of funds: New York State Office of Mental Health

Priorities Needs of Elderly and Frail Elderly Persons

- The Erie County Department of Environment and Planning and the Department of Senior Services will work with not-for-profit organizations and for profit organizations to develop affordable housing for low and moderate income elderly persons including the frail elderly in the Erie County CDBG Consortium. Not-for-profit organizations will provide serves to the elderly living in independent non supportive senior housing.
- Proposed senior housing developments for 2006 include the following:
 1. Holy Sprit Housing, Town of North Collin – 21 units at a cost of \$2,177,929 – Source of funds: private, Federal Community Development Block Grant funds, HOME Investment Partnership funds and HUD 202 Housing for the Elderly funds

2. Academy Place, Village of Gowanda – 32 units at a cost of \$3,500,000 –
Source of funds: HUD 202 Housing for the Elderly and Low Income Tax Credits

Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS

*Please also refer to the HOPWA Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Provide a Brief description of the organization, the area of service, the name of the program contacts, and a broad overview of the range/ type of housing activities to be done during the next year.
2. Report on the actions taken during the year that addressed the special needs of persons who are not homeless but require supportive housing, and assistance for persons who are homeless.
3. Evaluate the progress in meeting its specific objective of providing affordable housing, including a comparison of actual outputs and outcomes to proposed goals and progress made on the other planned actions indicated in the strategic and action plans. The evaluation can address any related program adjustments or future plans.
4. Report on the accomplishments under the annual HOPWA output goals for the number of households assisted during the year in: (1) short-term rent, mortgage and utility payments to avoid homelessness; (2) rental assistance programs; and (3) in housing facilities, such as community residences and SRO dwellings, where funds are used to develop and/or operate these facilities. Include any assessment of client outcomes for achieving housing stability, reduced risks of homelessness and improved access to care.
5. Report on the use of committed leveraging from other public and private resources that helped to address needs identified in the plan.
6. Provide an analysis of the extent to which HOPWA funds were distributed among different categories of housing needs consistent with the geographic distribution plans identified in its approved Consolidated Plan.
7. Describe any barriers (including non-regulatory) encountered, actions in response to barriers, and recommendations for program improvement.
8. Please describe the expected trends facing the community in meeting the needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS and provide additional information regarding the administration of services to people with HIV/AIDS.
9. Please note any evaluations, studies or other assessments that will be conducted on the local HOPWA program during the next year.

Program Year 2 Action Plan HOPWA response:

Not Applicable

Specific HOPWA Objectives

Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by the Action Plan.

Program Year 2 Specific HOPWA Objectives response:

Not Applicable

Other Narrative

Include any Action Plan information that was not covered by a narrative in any other section.